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POLAND: Jaruzelski's Optimism

Premier Jaruzelski appears generally satisfied with the results of marshal law to date and cautiously optimistic about the future.

Jaruzelski

commented that the worst was over even though tough economic problems remain. He admitted that sanctions had hit hard but added that Moscow would supply needed raw materials and that Western financial circles were "showing some interest" because of improved work discipline and increased production of coal and other raw materials. Jaruzelski also suggested that "subtle changes" in US thinking reflected a realization that letting Poland go bankrupt would damage the entire Western financial system.

The Premier said that a recent private government poll showed 69 percent favored the introduction of martial law. He noted, however, that this did not translate into support for the regime, and he did not rule out the possibility of the populace turning against the government if economic conditions worsened.

In addition, Jaruzelski said that the government was trying to create a national consensus, largely by breathing new life into parliament, and implicitly criticized the activities of the party-sponsored local Committees of National Salvation. The legislature meets today on short notice for the second time in a week.

Comment: The Polish leader's comments strongly imply that he continues to look to the West for expanded economic relations. He apparently believes that Warsaw has time on its side with regard to Western sanctions.

Jaruzelski might want to use the session of parliament to take some symbolic steps toward returning the country to civilian rule. His hope that parliament can be the government's bridge to society seems misplaced, however, as long as it passively adopts legislation.

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